



BROOKLINE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM

Brookline, Massachusetts

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DIRECTOR OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Go to www.brooklinema.gov for more information

Brookline Issues Cold Weather Alert

*Brookline Emergency Management Team Encourages the
Public to Take Precautions During Extreme Cold Weather*

With temperatures falling into single digits for the next several days, the Brookline Emergency Management Team has issued a cold weather emergency alert from Friday, February 12 through Monday, February 16, 2015. The following locations will be open to the public as warming rooms:

Brookline Senior Center

93 Winchester Street

Open Monday through Friday

8:30 am to 5:00 pm

The Brookline Elder Bus is heated and makes stops throughout the town, including at the "warming rooms" listed. Please call [617-730-2777](tel:617-730-2777) for a schedule or for further information.

Brookline Housing Authority Facilities

Please call the Housing Authority Management Office at
[617-277-2022](tel:617-277-2022) for further information.

Brookline Public Health Department

11 Pierce Street

Monday through Thursday: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Friday: 9:00 am to 12 noon

Brookline Public Libraries

Please call branch for details and hours:

Main Branch: 361 Washington Street – [617-730-2370](tel:617-730-2370)

Coolidge Corner Branch: 31 Pleasant Street – [617-730-2380](tel:617-730-2380)

Putterham Branch: 959 West Roxbury Parkway – [617-730-2385](tel:617-730-2385)

Brookline Public Safety Building

Open 24 hours per day

350 Washington Street

Please call the Brookline Police Department at [617-730-2222](tel:617-730-2222) for further information.

COLD WEATHER TIP SHEET

Cold weather can be dangerous to your health, but there are several ways to protect yourself. Two main cold-weather health concerns are *hypothermia* and *frostbite*.

WHAT IS HYPOTHERMIA?

Cold air causes your body to lose heat and drop in temperature. Hypothermia occurs when your body loses heat faster than it can produce it.

Warning Signs of hypothermia:

In Adults and Children:

- ✓ Shivering
- ✓ Fumbling hands
- ✓ Slurred speech
- ✓ Exhaustion
- ✓ Confusion/ Memory loss
- ✓ Dizziness

In Infants:

- ✓ Bright red, cold skin
- ✓ Very low energy

Who is most at risk for hypothermia?

Anyone can develop hypothermia, but those most likely to get it are:

- ✓ Elders
- ✓ Babies
- ✓ Unattended children
- ✓ Mentally ill individuals
- ✓ Those under the influence of alcohol
- ✓ Those who spend lots of time outdoors

What to do if you suspect someone has hypothermia:

Take the person's temperature. If it is below 95 degrees F, seek immediate medical attention. If medical help is delayed, get the person into a warm area, replace wet clothing with dry clothing, lay the person in a flat position, and warm the center of body first (e.g., chest, neck) using an electric blanket or skin to skin contact under loose layers of blankets or other dry materials. Give warm, non-alcoholic beverages if person is conscious. Handle the person gently, and do not massage or rub the person's arms or legs.

What is frostbite?

Frostbite occurs when cold air freezes a part of the body. Frostbite usually affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, and toes.

Warning signs for frostbite:

- ✓ Stinging, tingling, or aching in a skin area, followed by numbness
- ✓ A white or grayish-yellow skin area
- ✓ Skin that feels unusually firm or waxy

What to do if you suspect frostbite?

Seek medical attention immediately. Cover frostbitten areas with dry sterile gauze or soft, clean bandages. DO NOT massage the affected areas.

HOW TO KEEP WARM AND SAFE!

What to wear: Use a scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth. Wear a hat, mittens, sleeves that are snug at the wrist, water-resistant shoes, and many layers of loose-fitting clothes. Wool, silk, and propylene inner layers are better than cotton. Outer layers should be tightly woven, water-resistant, and wind-resistant.

Keeping dry: It is very important to stay dry. If you begin to perspire, reduce exertion and remove some layers of clothing.

What to eat and drink: Eat healthy, well-balanced meals. Drink lots of beverages, especially warm, sweet beverages, but **avoid** drinking alcohol. Reducing caffeine may help as well.

Shivering: Shivering means your body is losing heat. Go indoors as soon as possible.

Conserving heat in the home: Close off any unneeded rooms. Stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors. Cover windows with drapes or blankets at night.

Special Precautions for Elders:

Older adults produce less body heat. Persons 65 years and older should frequently check the temperature in their homes. Make sure to check on elderly friends and neighbors as well.

Special Precautions for Infants:

Give babies warm clothing and use infant sleep clothing that is designed to keep the infant warm at night without a blanket. Infants lose body heat more easily than adults and so should never sleep in a cold room. Try to keep a warm indoor temperature.

Simple Advice for Staying Safe in the C-O-L-D

C is for Cover: *cover vulnerable parts of your body, like the head, face, and hands*

O is for Overexertion: *avoid activities that cause sweating*

L is for Layers: *wear loose, layered clothing*

D is for Dry: *keep as dry as possible to avoid hypothermia*

WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE HEAT

If you lose heat or feel that you lack adequate heat, call the Brookline Health Department during normal business hours at 617-730-2300. After normal business hours, call the Brookline Police Department at 617-730-2222. A police officer will respond to take a temperature reading and follow-up.